

**April 21, 2010**

**WASHINGTON, DC** - Today, U.S. Rep. Michael A. Arcuri (NY-24) announced an award of 17 classic books on the theme of "A More Perfect Union" to 10 local libraries, made possible through the National Endowment for the Humanities' (NEH) *We the People* Bookshelf program. The Bookshelf includes Spanish translations to accompany three of the selected titles, as well as bonus materials for library patrons of all ages.

"Literature has the ability to convey American history in a way children of all ages can appreciate and understand," **said Arcuri**. "The 'More Perfect Union' Bookshelf will inspire and engage students through the words and deeds of Americans who have come before us to discover, shape, and uphold our nation's most valued principles."

"Since 2003, the *We the People* Bookshelf has introduced young readers at more than 17,000 school and public libraries to great literature and has helped them explore themes central to America's history," **said NEH Chairman Jim Leach**. "Through the Bookshelf, the Endowment provides high-quality educational resources to our nation's libraries. This year readers at 4,000 libraries will be invited to explore the idea that the United States is a union, a 'one' as well as a 'many.'"

Area libraries that will be receiving book sets as part of the *We the People* Bookshelf Program include:

- Candor Elementary School in Candor, NY;
- Geneva Middle School in Geneva, NY;
- Frank J. Basloe Public Library in Herkimer, NY;
- Guernsey Memorial Library in Norwich, NY;
- Edith B. Ford Memorial Library in Ovid, NY;
- South Seneca Middle/High School in Ovid, NY;
- Sherburne Public Library in Sherburne, NY;
- Springport Free Public Library in Union Springs, NY;
- Columbus Elementary School in Utica, NY; and,
- Owen D. Young Central School District Library in Van Hornesville, NY.

The *We the People* Bookshelf program will distribute 4,000 sets of books to city, town, and neighborhood libraries as well as libraries in public, private, charter, and tribal schools, in all 50 states. Each library will receive a set of the 17 books along with posters, bookmarks, and other promotional materials from NEH through the American Library Association (ALA), which is working in partnership with the Endowment. As part of the award, libraries are organizing programs or events to raise awareness of these classic books and engage young readers from May 1, 2010 through Apr. 30, 2011.

Programs for this year's *We the People* Bookshelf, on the theme "A More Perfect Union," are timed to coincide with the Nation's commemoration of the American Civil War, which began 150 years ago. The Bookshelf features the following books:

- **Kindergarten to Grade 3:** *Tico and the Golden Wings* by Leo Lionni; *A More Perfect Union: The Story of Our Constitution* by Betsy and Giulio Maestro; *Una unión más perfecta: la historia de nuestra constitución* by Betsy and Giulio Maestro (translated by Aída E. Marcuse); *When Marian Sang: The True Recital of Marian Anderson* by Pam Muñoz Ryan

- **Grades 4 to 6:** *César ¡Sí, se puede!* by Carmet T. Bernier-Grand (Spanish edition); *César ¡Si, Se Puede! / Yes, We Can!* By Carmen T. Bernier-Grand; *Eagle Song* by Joseph Bruchac; *The Great Little Madison* by Jean Fritz; *Darby* by Jonathon Scott Fuqua

- **Grades 7 to 8:** *Chains* by Laurie Halse Anderson; *Warriors Don't Cry* by Melba Beals; *Lincoln Shot!* *A President's Life Remembered* by Barry Denenberg; *Hitch*

by Jeanette Ingold

- **Grades 9 to 12:** *The Souls of Black Folk* by W. E. B. DuBois; *American Creation: Triumphs and Tragedies at the Founding of the Republic* by Joseph Ellis;  
*Lincoln in His Own Words* by Milton Meltzer;  
*Carver: A Life in Poems* by Marilyn Nelson;  
*Twelve Angry Men* by Reginald Rose;  
*Ángeles asesinos* by Michael Shaara (translated by Manuel de los Reyes);  
*Killer Angels* by Michael Shaara

- **Bonus:** *The Civil War: A Film by Ken Burns*; *The Civil War: An Illustrated History* by Geoffrey Ward, Ric Burns, Ken Burns;  
*Declaring Independence: The Origin and Influence of America's Founding Document* edited by Christian Y. Dupont

The Bookshelf program is part of the NEH's *We the People* program, which supports projects that strengthen the teaching, study, and understanding of American history and culture.

Created in 1965 as an independent federal agency, the **National Endowment for the Humanities** supports learning in history, literature, philosophy, and other areas of the humanities. NEH grants enrich classroom learning, create and preserve knowledge, and bring ideas to life through public television, radio, new technologies, museum exhibitions, and programs in libraries and other community places. Additional information about the National Endowment for the Humanities, its grant programs, and the *We the People* Bookshelf is available on the Internet at [www.neh.gov](http://www.neh.gov)

*For information about the **American Library Association**, the organization partnering with NEH to select and distribute the Bookshelf, please visit*

*[www.ala.org](http://www.ala.org)*

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